

SENATE BILL NO. 30

INTRODUCED BY F. SMITH

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A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT ALLOWING A QUALIFIED VETERAN TO BE ISSUED SPECIAL COMBINATION DISABLED VETERAN AND PURPLE HEART LICENSE PLATES; AND AMENDING SECTIONS 49-4-302, 49-4-304, AND 61-3-458, MCA."

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

**Section 1.** Section 49-4-302, MCA, is amended to read:

**"49-4-302. Privileges of permitholder -- privilege for disabled veteran -- exemptions from time limits -- requirements for special parking spaces.** (1) The parking permit issued under this part, when displayed, entitles a person to park a motor vehicle in a special parking space reserved for a person with a disability, whether on public property or on private property available for public use, when the person for whom the permit was issued is using the special parking space to enter or exit the vehicle.

(2) A vehicle may not be parked in a parking space on public or private property that is clearly identified by an official sign as being reserved for use by a person with a disability unless:

(a) the vehicle is lawfully displaying a parking permit issued under this part, a distinguishing license plate or placard for a person with a disability that was issued by a foreign jurisdiction conferring parking privileges similar to those conferred in subsection (1), or a specially inscribed license plate displaying the letters "DV" issued under 61-3-458(3)(b) or (3)(i) or displaying a wheelchair as provided in 61-3-332(9); and

(b) the reserved parking space is being used by the person for whom the permit, plate, or placard was issued to enter or exit the vehicle.

(3) The governing body of a city, town, or county may exempt vehicles lawfully displaying parking permits issued under this part and vehicles lawfully displaying specially inscribed license plates displaying the letters "DV" issued under 61-3-458(3)(b) or (3)(i) or displaying a wheelchair as provided in 61-3-332(9) and parked in public places along public streets from any time limitation imposed upon parking, except in areas where:

(a) stopping, standing, or parking of all vehicles is prohibited;

(b) only special vehicles may be parked; or

(c) parking is not allowed during specific periods of the day in order to accommodate heavy traffic.



1 (4) In accordance with subsection (2), the governing body of a city, town, or county or appropriate state  
2 agency may impose all, but not less than all, of the following requirements with respect to any special parking  
3 space constructed after September 30, 1985, and reserved for a person with a disability or a permit holder on  
4 ways of this state open to the public, as defined in 61-8-101:

5 (a) The space must be located on a smooth, level surface as near as practicable to building entrances  
6 or walkways that have curb cuts and appropriately designed ramps and access lanes to accommodate  
7 wheelchairs.

8 (b) If parallel to curbside, the parking space must be separated from an adjacent space, either in the front  
9 or the rear, by at least 5 feet of striped no-parking area.

10 (c) If at an angle to curbside, the parking space must be at least 8 feet wide and free of obstruction if  
11 located at the end of a line of angle parking spaces, and each other angle parking space designated for a person  
12 with a disability must be at least 13 feet wide.

13 (d) A parking space reserved for a person with a disability must be designated by a sign showing the  
14 international symbol of accessibility, indicating that a permit is required, and stating the penalty for a violation.  
15 In order to meet the penalty statement requirement, signs existing on October 1, 1993, must have attached a  
16 decal stating the penalty for a violation. The sign must be attached to a wall or post in a way that it is not obscured  
17 by a vehicle parked in the space."  
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19 **Section 2.** Section 49-4-304, MCA, is amended to read:

20 **"49-4-304. Special license plate or card to be provided and displayed -- additional cards allowed**  
21 **for owners of more than one vehicle.** (1) Except as authorized in 49-4-303, unless the department of justice  
22 issued a special license plate under 61-3-332(9) or 61-3-458(3)(b) or (3)(i) indicating a special parking privilege,  
23 the department shall provide a card to be displayed on or in a motor vehicle to indicate a parking privilege granted  
24 under this part. The special license plate must be affixed to the vehicle according to 61-3-301, or the card must  
25 be prominently displayed in the windshield of a vehicle when the parking privilege is being used by the person  
26 with a disability in a vehicle other than the one to which a special license plate is affixed.

27 (2) Subject to the provisions of 49-4-301 through 49-4-305, a person who is eligible to receive a special  
28 parking permit and who owns more than one motor vehicle may request and the department of justice shall  
29 provide additional cards described in subsection (1) to equal the number of motor vehicles, other than commercial  
30 vehicles, owned by the person.

1 (3) Upon application under 49-4-301, a person with a disability who does not hold a driver's license or  
2 does not own a vehicle may receive a card described in subsection (1) to be displayed in a vehicle in which the  
3 person with a disability is being conveyed when the parking privilege is being used.

4 (4) The card must bear a representation of a wheelchair as the symbol of a person with a disability."  
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6 **Section 3.** Section 61-3-458, MCA, is amended to read:

7 **"61-3-458. Special plates for military personnel, veterans, and spouses.** (1) (a) Active military  
8 personnel, veterans, or the surviving spouse of an eligible veteran, if the spouse has not remarried, may be  
9 issued special military or veteran license plates as provided in this section.

10 (b) Subject to the provisions of 61-3-332 and except as otherwise provided in this chapter, special  
11 license plates issued pursuant to this section must be numbered in sets of two with a different number on each  
12 set and must be properly displayed as provided in 61-3-301. Special military or veteran license plates may not  
13 be issued for a motorcycle, quadricycle, travel trailer, trailer, semitrailer, or pole trailer. Special military or veteran  
14 license plates bearing a wheelchair as the symbol of a person with a disability may be issued to a person who  
15 meets the qualifications under 61-3-332(9) and this section.

16 (2) (a) Upon application, after paying all applicable motor vehicle, trailer, semitrailer, or pole trailer  
17 registration fees and special license plate fees and providing an official certificate from the applicant's unit  
18 commander verifying the individual's eligibility and authorizing the department to issue the plates to the individual,  
19 eligible military personnel may be issued one set of special military license plates as provided in this subsection  
20 (2).

21 (b) A member of the Montana national guard who is a state resident may be issued special license plates  
22 with a design or decal displaying the letters "NG". However, the member shall surrender the plates to the  
23 department when the member becomes ineligible.

24 (c) A member of the reserve armed forces of the United States who is a state resident may be issued  
25 special license plates according to the member's branch of service verified in the application with a design or  
26 decal displaying one of the following: United States army reserve, AR (symbol); United States naval reserve, NR  
27 (anchor); United States air force reserve, AFR (symbol); or United States marine corps reserve, MCR (globe and  
28 anchor). However, the member shall surrender the plates to the department when the member becomes  
29 ineligible.

30 (d) An active member of the regular armed forces of the United States who is a state resident may be

1 issued special license plates inscribed with a symbol signifying the United States army, United States navy,  
2 United States air force, United States marine corps, or United States coast guard, according to the member's  
3 branch of service verified in the application. However, the member shall surrender the plates to the department  
4 upon becoming ineligible.

5 (3) (a) Upon application, after presenting proper identification and a department of defense form 214  
6 (DD-214) or its successor or documents showing an other-than-dishonorable discharge or a reenlistment verifying  
7 the applicant's eligibility and paying the veterans' cemetery fee specified in 61-3-459 and all applicable motor  
8 vehicle, trailer, semitrailer, or pole trailer registration fees under this chapter, subject to the provisions of 61-3-460,  
9 an eligible veteran must be issued any set and more than one set of the special license plates provided for in this  
10 subsection (3) that the member requests and is eligible to receive.

11 (b) A veteran may be issued special license plates displaying the letters "DV", which entitles the veteran  
12 to the parking privileges allowed to a person with a special parking permit issued under Title 49, chapter 4, part  
13 3, if the veteran:

14 (i) has been awarded the purple heart and has been rated by the U.S. department of veterans affairs as  
15 50% or more disabled because of a service-connected injury; or

16 (ii) is currently rated 100% disabled or is paid at the 100% disabled rate by the U.S. department of  
17 veterans affairs for a service-connected disability.

18 (c) A veteran who has been awarded the purple heart may be issued special license plates with the  
19 purple heart decal displaying the words "combat wounded".

20 (d) A veteran who was captured and held prisoner by the military force of a foreign nation may be issued  
21 special license plates with a design or decal displaying the words "ex-prisoner of war" or an abbreviation that the  
22 department considers appropriate.

23 (e) If the veteran was a member of the United States armed forces on December 7, 1941, and during  
24 the hours of 7:55 a.m. to 9:45 a.m. (Hawaii time) was on station at Pearl Harbor on the island of Oahu or was  
25 offshore from Pearl Harbor at a distance of not more than 3 miles, the veteran may be issued special license  
26 plates designed to show that the veteran is a survivor of the Pearl Harbor attack.

27 (f) A person who is a member of the legion of valor may be issued special plates displaying a design or  
28 decal depicting the recognized legion of valor medallion.

29 (g) A veteran may be issued special license plates displaying the word "VETERAN" and a symbol  
30 signifying the United States army, United States navy, United States air force, United States marine corps, or

1 United States coast guard, according to the veteran's service record verified in the application.

2 (h) A member or a former member of the Montana national guard eligible to receive a military retirement  
3 may be issued special license plates displaying the Montana national guard insignia and the words "National  
4 Guard veteran".

5 (i) A veteran who qualifies under subsections (3)(b) and (3)(c) may be issued special combination license  
6 plates displaying the letters "DV" and displaying a purple heart decal with the words "combat wounded". A person  
7 who receives the combination plates is entitled to the same parking privileges as provided in subsection (3)(b).

8 (4) Upon request, after paying the veterans' cemetery fee provided in 61-3-459 and all applicable vehicle  
9 registration fees under this chapter, subject to the provisions of 61-3-460, the surviving spouse of an eligible  
10 veteran, if the spouse has not remarried, may retain the special license plates issued to the deceased veteran,  
11 except the special "DV" plates provided for under subsection (3)(b) or the combination plates provided for in  
12 subsection (3)(i).

13 (5) For purposes of this section, "veteran" has the meaning provided in 10-2-101."

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